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7PM-NICARAGUA-MANUAL; 1ST LD; A016,0200

7URGENT

7BY ROBERT PARRY

7ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP) - THE HOUSE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE TODAY CONCLUDED THAT THE CIA'S MANUAL FOR NICARAGUAN REBELS VIOLATED A 1982 LAW BARRING U.S. EFFORTS TO OVERTHROW THAT NATION'S LEFTIST GOVERNMENT AND REVEALED A LACK OF "COMMAND AND CONTROL OF THE ENTIRE NICARAGUAN COVERT ACTION."

BUT THE PANEL ADDED THAT "NEGLIGENCE, NOT INTENT TO VIOLATE THE LAW, MARKED THE MANUAL'S HISTORY."

THE DEMOCRATIC-CONTROLLED COMMITTEE REACHED ITS CONCLUSION DURING A 2½-HOUR CLOSED HEARING TODAY AFTER TESTIMONY FROM CIA DIRECTOR WILLIAM J. CASEY AND OTHER SENIOR AGENCY OFFICIALS. ONE COMMITTEE MEMBER SAID THE CONCLUSIONS REFLECTED A CONSENSUS OF THE PANEL, INCLUDING REPUBLICANS.

THE MEMBER, WHO SPOKE ON CONDITION HE NOT BE IDENTIFIED, SAID CASEY ARGUED THAT THE MANUAL'S REFERENCE TO "NEUTRALIZING" NICARAGUAN OFFICIALS WAS A PROBLEM OF SEMANTICS AND NOT A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO VIOLATE EITHER THE OVERTHROW BAN OR A PROHIBITION ON U.S. PARTICIPATION IN ASSASSINATIONS.

ON THE ASSASSINATION QUESTION, THE COMMITTEE CONCLUDED THAT "THERE WAS NO INTENTIONAL VIOLATION" OF THE 1981 PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER THAT CONTAINS THE PROHIBITION.

THE COMMITTEE'S CONCLUSIONS WERE CONTAINED IN A DRAFT PRESS RELEASE, OBTAINED BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, THAT HAD NOT BEEN FORMALLY CLEARED FOR PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION.

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THE DRAFT RELEASE SAID THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL WAS "TO PROVIDE TRAINING TO MODERATE (REBEL) BEHAVIOR IN THE FIELD. YET; THE COMMITTEE BELIEVES THAT THE MANUAL WAS WRITTEN; EDITED; DISTRIBUTED AND USED WITHOUT ADEQUATE SUPERVISION.

"NO ONE BUT ITS AUTHOR PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO THE MANUAL. MOST CIA OFFICIALS LEARNED ABOUT IT FROM NEWS ACCOUNTS."

THE EXISTENCE OF THE MANUAL WAS REPORTED BY THE AP ON OCT. 14; PROMPTING INVESTIGATIONS BY THE CIA'S INSPECTOR GENERAL; THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE OVERSIGHT BOARD AND THE HOUSE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE. BESIDES THE "NEUTRALIZE" SECTION; THE 90-PAGE BOOKLET CALLED FOR CREATING A "MARTYR;" HIRING PROFESSIONAL CRIMINALS AND COERCING NICARAGUANS INTO CARRYING OUT ASSIGNMENTS.

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S REPORT RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINING SIX MID- AND JUNIOR-LEVEL AGENCY OFFICIALS; SEVERAL OF WHOM COMPLAINED THEY WERE BEING MADE "SCAPEGOATS" TO PROTECT SENIOR OFFICIALS. ONE OFFICIAL WAS SPARED PUNISHMENT AND THE MANUAL'S AUTHOR; KNOWN BY HIS PSEUDONYM JOHN KIRKPATRICK; WAS ALLOWED TO RESIGN HIS CONTRACT.

ALTHOUGH NOT COMMENTING ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SENIOR OFFICIALS; THE DRAFT RELEASE SAID "THE INCIDENT OF THE MANUAL ILLUSTRATES ONCE AGAIN TO A MAJORITY OF THE COMMITTEE THAT THE CIA DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE COMMAND AND CONTROL OF THE ENTIRE NICARAGUAN COVERT ACTION."

THE 1982 LAW BARRING ATTEMPTS TO OVERTHROW THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT IS COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE BOLAND AMENDMENT AFTER ITS SPONSOR; REP. EDWARD P. BOLAND; D-MASS.; CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE.

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